

## Message Text

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15

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 ABF-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 L-03 PM-07

NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EUR-25

NEA-10 DRC-01 /164 W

----- 130305

R 140858Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1597

INFO USUN NEW YORK 1291

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8434

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AFIN, AORG, UN, KS

SUBJ: UN MEMORIAL CEMETERY

REF: USUN 5480

SUMMARY: MOFA HAS REQUESTED EARLY USG VIEWS ON QUESTION OF TEMP-

ORARY CUSTODIANSHIP OF UN MEMORIAL CEMETERY AND ON FORMATION OF  
UN MEMORIAL CEMETERY COMMISSION. END SUMMARY.

1. MOFA INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION BUREAU DIRECTOR HAN CALLED IN  
POLCOUNS ALONG WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM AUSTRALIAN AND DUTCH EMBASSI  
ES TO

DISCUSS UN MEMORIAL CEMETERY. (HAN ALSO CALLED IN SEPARATELY  
OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERESTED EMBASSIES.)

2. HAN SAID PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS TO POINT OUT THAT, WITH DISSOL-  
UTION OF UNCURK, ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE MADE SOON FOR MAINTENANCE  
OF UN CEMETERY. HE INDICATED THAT ROKG WISHES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE  
OTHER GOVERNMENTS' VIEWS ON:

A. QUESTION OF TEMPORARY CUSTODIANSHIP:

HAN POINTED OUT THAT UNCURK OFFICER ACTING AS DEPUTY CUSTODIAN  
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WILL REMAIN IN ROK UNTIL EARLY JANUARY. TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBIL-

ITY MUST BE BEFORE THAT TIME. THEREFORE, WE MUST QUICKLY AGREE ON QUESTION OF A TEMPORARY CUSTODIAN. ROKG HAS NO FIRM PROPOSAL BUT IS WILLING TO CONSIDER VARIOUS OPTIONS. HAN THREW OUT POSSIBILITY EITHER OF ASKING PRESIDENT UNDP OFFICE TO ASSUME TEMPORARY CUSTODIANSHIP OR OF LETTING ROKG PERFORM THIS ROLE.

B. FORMATION OF MEMORIAL CEMETERY COMMISSION: HAN SAID THAT MOFA BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD MOVE QUICKLY IN FORMING COMMISSION UNDER ARTICLE 9(1) OF ROK-UN 1959 AGREEMENT. AGAIN HAN INDICATED THAT ROK HAD NO SPECIFIC PROPOSAL AND WISHED VIEWS OF OTHERS ON HOW TO PROCEED. SAID THAT ONE APPROACH WHICH MIGHT BE CONSIDERED WOULD BE FOR FORMATION OF COMMITTEE OF EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES IN SEOUL TO OVERSEE CEMETERY WITH MOFA SERVING AS PERMANENT CUSTODIAN AND DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITY FOR CEMETERY UPKEEP TO MAYOR OF PUSAN. AUSTRALIAN REP SUGGESTED CONSIDERING ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP OF CEMETERY TO MND OFFICE OF NATIONAL CEMETERIES.

3. HAN ALSO REVIEWED QUESTION OF FUNDING OF CEMETERY, ALTHOUGH INDICATING THIS NOT PRESSING ISSUE. HE DISCUSSED MATTER BRIEFLY ALONG NEW YORK DISCUSSIONS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED. NOTED THAT IF CURRENT POSITION OF "INTERNATIONAL OFFICER" AT CEMETERY WERE ELIMINATED, ROK ESTIMATED THAT COST OF MAINTAINING CEMETERY MIGHT BE CUT IN HALF. ALSO SAID ROKG PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE "GENEROUSLY" TO ANNUAL MAINTENANCE COSTS.

4. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT WE INDICATE TO MOFA OUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN MEMORIAL CEMETERY COMMISSION AND TO PROPOSE THAT ROKG ASSUME TEMPORARY CUSTODIANSHIP OF CEMETERY PENDING FORMATION OF COMMISSION AND SUBSEQUENT CONSIDERATION OF LONGER-TERM ARRANGEMENTS. IN VIEW OF SMALL NUMBER OF AMERICANS ACTUALLY BURIED IN CEMETERY (FOUR OUT OF 2,267) BELIEVE WE SHOULD ACCEPT ANY REASONABLE CONSENSUS WHICH WOULD ARISE OUT OF MOFA CONSULTATIONS WITH INTERESTED EMBASSIES, RATHER THAN ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE OUR OWN VIEWS ON HOW COMMISSION AND PERMANENT CUSTODIANSHIP SHOULD BE SET UP. HOWEVER, BELIEVE MOST WORKABLE ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE COMMISSION FORMED OF ROKG AND INTERESTED EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES. COMMISSION COULD BE CHARGED WITH GENERAL SUPERVISION OF CEMETERY WITH A ROK AGENCY DESIGNATED AS CUSTODIAN. WE ARE STUDYING THIS QUESTION FURTHER BUT OUR INITIAL VIEW IS ALONG LINES OF THAT OF AUSTRALIANS. I.E., PUTTING CUSTODIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN MND OFFICE OF NATIONAL CEMETERIES WHICH IS ALREADY EXPERIENCED IN MAINTAINING CEMETERIES.

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5. REQUEST DEPARTMENT VIEWS. MOFA WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AT LEAST PRELIMINARY COMMENTS EARLY NEXT WEEK.  
UNDERHILL

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